



INSTRUCT-O-GRAM

THE HANDS-ON TRAINING GUIDE FOR THE FIRE INSTRUCTOR

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STRATEGY AND TACTICS

TIME REQUIRED

3 HOURS

MOTIVATION

In today's world of fire fighting, the fire service has three objectives to meet — saving lives, conserving property, and protecting our environment. For the fire service to accomplish these objectives as efficiently as possible, a sequence of operational practices have been developed over the years.

Decisions on the proper techniques in fire fighting any fire or operating at an emergency scene will depend on many variables. Probably the most important is experience, which helps to make the right decision at the right time.

Because of the relative infrequency of large fires, many firefighters, company officers, and even chief officers sometimes lack such experience.

OBJECTIVE

It is the principle objective of this series of Instruct-O-Grams to provide the necessary information on the most effective fire fighting techniques.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

The student shall have an understanding of the following:

1. What is Strategy and Tactics
2. Tactical Priorities and Fire Ground Objectives
3. Relationship between the Priorities and Objectives

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

A. What Is Strategy?

1. Strategy involves the development of a basic plan to deal with an incident most effectively.
2. It is a written overall plan to guide the I.C. to control an emergency situation
3. This plan is derived from pre-incident planning, tours and walk-through of target hazards, and other information gathering systems.
 - a. Strategy Must Identify:
 - 1) Major Goals
 - Stop the fire, rescue victims

Goals are broad based

2) Prioritize Objectives

Stretch initial lines and stop the fire,
perform a search

Objectives do not tell us how to
accomplish the objectives

b. Strategic Decisions are based upon:

1) Situation Evaluation

What happened

What have I got

Where is it going

How do I handle it

2) Risk Potential

What is the risk to the victims

What is the risk to emergency
responders

3) Available Resources

Who is on scene

Who is coming

What about the knowledge,
training, and skills of those on
scene or

Responding

c. Strategic Questions

In order to arrive at a good strategic
plan, the IC must answer these simple
questions:

1) Who is needed to perform the
operations

2) What are they supposed to do

3) Where on the fire ground will these
tasks be performed

B. What Is Tactics?

1. Tactics are the actual methods of operations
employed by individuals, groups, or compa-
nies to achieve the strategic goals set by the
IC

2. Tactics is the “doing” of all the necessary
activities needed to accomplish the goals set
by the IC

3. It’s the “down and dirty” of the job

4. Tactics must follow the goals and objectives
set forth by the strategic plan.

Many times this is done in the reverse order.
We attempt to make or adopt our strategy to
fit the tactics. This can lead to “social
interaction” on the fire ground.

C. Tactical Priorities

The Tactical Fire Ground priorities are as
follows:

1. Rescue of savable victims

2. Incident Stabilization

3. Property Conservation

a. Rescue/Life Safety:

1) Protect occupants

By whatever means possible

By holding the fire with hose lines,
extinguishing the fire, and by
placing a line between the victims
and the fire and establish a means of
egress

b. Incident Stabilization/Fire Control

1) Stop the Progress of the Fire

Aggressive interior attack

Outside defensive operations

2) Bring the fire under control

Can be handled by anything from a
hand extinguisher to multiple
master stream operations

3) Extinguish the fire

Once we have enough resources in
manpower, equipment, and
extinguishing agent, then we can
concentrate on final extinguishment

c. Property Conservation

Reduce property loss from the fire and
products of combustion to both the
property owner and the municipality.

Also reduce property damage and loss from our fire fighting activities which in some cases may cause more damage than the actual fire.

d. Tactical Priorities Must be Performed in the Order Given

- 1) Rescue
- 2) Incident stabilization
- 3) Property conservation

e. Factors Influencing Tactical Decisions

- 1) Fire extent and location
- 2) Building construction
- 3) Building occupancy
- 4) Water supply
- 5) Manpower
- 6) Deployment of forces
- 7) Sequence of operations
- 8) Coordination control and supervision
- 9) Communications

f. Tactical Weaknesses

- 1) Improperly analyzing the situation
- 2) Failure to protect exposures
- 3) Failure to protect against extension
- 4) Lack of communications
- 5) Fear of excessive damage
- 6) Using habits developed at routine fires
 - Small attack lines
 - Underestimating the fire
 - Using low GPM nozzles
 - Not seeing the "Big Picture"
- 7) Failure to change tactics
- 8) Using bad practices
- 9) Overlooking good practices
- 10) Improper utilization of manpower
- 11) Improper safety precautions
- 12) Unclear as to "Who is in Charge"

D. Fire Ground Objectives

Objectives that must be performed at the fire scene are:

1. Rescue
2. Exposures
3. Confinement
4. Extinguishment
5. Overhaul
6. Ventilation
7. Salvage

Rescue of endangered occupants

Will include operations which require the removal of human beings from an involved structure or other hazardous situations and convey them to a place of safety

Exposure protection

Includes those operations which requires and prevents a fire from extending to uninvolved areas, buildings, or separate unit

Confine the fire

Includes those operations which are required to prevent a fire from extending to uninvolved sections of a building

Extinguish the fire

Includes the operations which require the attacking and extinguishing the main body of fire

Overhaul operations

Operations which are required to complete the extinguishment or remaining fire, prevent rekindle, and place the building or the fire area in a safe condition

Ventilation operations

Those operations which are required to displace a heated and contaminated atmosphere within an involved building with

normal air from outside atmosphere to help in the saving of lives, making a safer working environment, and reduce the dangers from backdraft and flashover, and to also reduce property damage

Salvage operations

Includes those operations which are required to protect buildings and contents from preventable damage due to fire, heat, smoke, water, and other elements

These Fire Ground Objectives are commonly known as:

RECEO+VS

These objectives do not necessarily have to be followed in this particular order. They can be moved to whatever priority they present themselves.

Relationship Between The Fire Ground Priorities And Objectives:

Priorities Objectives

Rescue

Exposures

Incident Stabilization Confinement

Extinguishment

Property Conservation Salvage

Overhaul

Ventilation

REFERENCE:

Fire Command Brunicini

Incident Management for the Street Smart Officer
Coleman

Fire Officers Handbook of Tactics Norman

Engine and Ladder Company Operations Richman

Eight Steps to Strategy and Tactics Carter

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The materials in this Instruct-O-Gram are provided courtesy of Michael J. Toth, Ex-chief, East Franklin Twp. Vol. Fire Dept., and Capt. (Ret) New Brunswick Fire Department and is currently the Training Officer for the Franklin Twp. Fire Dist. #3 in Somerset, New Jersey

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